

Background Information on the Teachers and the Centers

Questions for Tahnahga Myers about her Native American Ancestral Teachings

Jonathan Ellis: Tahnahga, I know you have tribal connections both in the Northeast and the Midwest. Can you tell us about your ancestral background?

Tahnahga Myers: I was born a Taino, Bear Clan Mohawk woman in upstate New York. For 23 years, I have worked with various elders throughout the Midwest and Northeast. These teachings are based in Mohawk and Anishinabe cultural ways of life that encompass the understanding that all things are interconnected. Through this understanding one begins a journey of reverence for self and all life forms. I am an activist for the on-going of the people.

Jonathan Ellis: You have moved to Ann Arbor and are offering Native American wisdom teachings to both individuals and groups. Can you tell us about that?

Tahnahga Myers: When I meet with individuals or groups, I support them to reconnect with the sacredness of place and nature that provides an antidote to the psychic pain and isolation so pervasive in present life. I use hands-on environmental experiences to enable individuals to cultivate a deeply personal relationship with the Universal Circle of Life while learning to quiet internal distractions.

JE: What might bring people to work with you?

Tahnahga Myers: I can guide people to feel more rooted in their ongoing life journey. I help folks cultivate their ability to speak, live and honor their Truth in alignment with their life purpose. I am committed to sharing with others how a spiritual way of life does not have to be bound



Tahnahga Myers

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by dogma. I teach how to live each day as a blessing and how to experience the gift of another breath, another day of life. I call this approach, “One Mind, One Heart, One Spirit, One Soul.”

JE: Can you give us some examples of what might happen in individual sessions with you?

Jan Phillips is an award-winning photographer, multimedia artist, and author of *God is at Eye Level*, *Marry Your Muse*, *Diving the Body*, and *The Art of Original Thinking*. She was co-founder of Syracuse Cultural Workers.

Terri Pickett is a Certified Birthing From Within Instructor, clinical social worker, and mother of two children.

Sandie Pierce holds a certificate in Level I Yoga through YogFit.

Ellen Porter, M.Ac., L.Ac., Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM), is a nationally board certified Five Element Acupuncturist.

Carolyn Putney is Acting Deputy Director and Curator of Asian Art at Toledo Museum of Art.

Quest Martial Arts instructors help students learn in a safe environment while having fun, emphasizing the student's development through both physical skills and life skills.

Mara Radzwickas is a longtime student of esoteric thought as expressed through the great religions, poetry, and mythology with a particular interest in quantum theory. She is a board member and past president of The Theosophical Society in Detroit.

Anuja Rajendra is creator of BollyFit, the fitness through dance sensation illuminating America. She is a trained dancer, choreographer, and magnetic motivational speaker.

Deborah Reble is a licensed psychologist with expertise in the areas of individual and relationship counseling. As a therapeutic intuitive, she specializes in energetic healing and meditation, and guides people on their pathway toward personal transformation.

Ita Reyes, CYI, has been practicing yoga for seven years.

Barbara Robertson, is the director/owner of The Breastfeeding Center of Ann Arbor. She is a board certified Lactation Consultant and breastfeeding educator who loves working with moms and babies, helping them with breastfeeding challenges in whatever ways she can.

The Rudolf Steiner Health Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization located in Ann Arbor.

The Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor offers pre-K through 12th grade education in the Waldorf tradition. RSSAA strives to educate the whole child, integrates the arts and academics, and awakens a lifelong love of learning through creative play and a developmentally appropriate approach to education.

Barbara Boyk Rust, PhD, has practiced psychotherapy in Ann Arbor since 1989. Her training includes the study and practice of spiritual traditions and healing modalities. She has taught classes and offered healing ceremonies for life transitions and healing for individuals, families, and communities for 25 years.

Sally Rutzky holds an Introductory yoga certificate and has taught for 27 years.

Sue Salaniuk holds a Junior Intermediate III yoga certificate and has taught for 21 years.

Judy Sauer, author of *Footloose and Gluten-Free*, has been guiding people through dietary transitions associated with food allergies for over six years.

Janet Schaeffler, OP, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, has been engaged in the field of education and in leadership positions in Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation and has authored publications on topics of faith formation, parish ministry, and family life.

Bill Schafer, PhD, is a clinical psychologist, certified Enneagram teacher in the Narrative Tradition, and author of *Roaming Free Inside the Cage: A Daoist Approach to the Enneagram and Spiritual Transformation*.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders and the Centers

Tahnahga Myers: I first ask individuals to define their meaning of a spiritual path, what are their needs, wants and desires of this journey. After a first session, I might give them an assignment such as spending time walking in nature to smell, hear, touch and feel the trees, the wind, to feel the ground, the soil, the grass, then lay down on the ground and look up at the sky and passing clouds. The purpose behind this is to help the individual to begin the journey of silence within, to open their heart space and quiet the mind.

“I lead workshops in building Mound gardens and designing medicine wheel gardens, as well as on making a relationship with the tall ones, the trees.”

JE: Many of your programs for groups also take place outdoors.

Tahnahga Myers: These are guided explorations of self and spirit that include an inner journey through outdoor activities, reconnecting with Spirit through our relationship with the environment and each other, including reflection and integration time. From this place of balance comes an awakening of our inner spirit.

For instance, one workshop theme is the fire within, understanding fire and our ancient relationship, fire as the origins of life, fire as birth and reformulation, fire as our spiritual path.

In groups, I work to encourage a sense of awareness that you are not alone, that you are part of the web of life, and what happens to one happens to all of us. I lead workshops in building Mound gardens and designing medicine wheel gardens, as well as on making a relationship with the tall ones, the trees. Through these kinds of experiences, a person will learn how to work through their fear and doubts about being with self.

You have served as an independent consultant and trainer to local and national agencies throughout the U.S. How did you come to be doing that work?

Tahnahga Myers: In 1991, I created the Tree of Peace, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping native women, youth, and communities. From that work, I went on to offer counseling, training, program development, restorative justice and group facilitation for Native American and non-native communities around the country.

Another focus for you has been preserving Indigenous heirloom seeds.

Tahnahga Myers: Native American heirloom seeds hold the key to life; without it there would be no life, no on-going of the people. Because these are heirloom seeds, they hold sustenance to nourishing one's life. When you are holding 800 year-old seeds in your hand, once again they are in the world. How do I plant these seeds, how do I nurture these seeds, what do these seeds need to live and grow. What happens is, the seeds teach you how to nurture them, as we learn to nurture ourselves.

You are also a performing artist and have written and produced plays and given poetry and storytelling readings. What is involved?

Tahnahga Myers: My plays bring together many different art forms - painting, beadwork, traditional dance, poetry, music and audio art. The plays express the balance, harmony and inherent responsibilities of the spirit in today's world. My poetry and storytelling explores the cycles of life, and reflects my Native American spirituality remembered through vision and dreaming.

You will be adding your particular ancestral teachings to the wonderful pool of wisdom offerings in Ann Arbor that have come from many places around the world. Your own traditions are of course “native” to this land.

Tahnahga Myers: I do find in other cultural teachings similarities with

Tahnahga Myers is leading a number of workshops that are listed in the Calendar. Her *Healing the Elements in Ourselves* workshop can be found in the ‘Spiritual Development’ section. Her *Healing the Fire Within* workshop is in the ‘Native American section’. Her *Healing Our Relationship with Plants* is in the ‘Herbs’ section.

my own traditions. The ancestor spirits are so alive here in part because so many different wisdom teachings are now represented in this area around Ann Arbor.

Anything else you'd like to add, Tahnahga?

Tahnahga Myers: Now that I live in Ann Arbor, I have begun to offer individual sessions as well as group workshops locally, under the name, “In the Hands of the Ancestors.” (*Tahnahga Myers can be reached at 734 730-9950.*)

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Natasha Schaffer is a certified Yoga Meets Dance facilitator and has been teaching, dancing, and practicing yoga for 12 years. She leads Yoga Meets Dance journeys to share her love of movement, music, and fun with students of all ages and abilities.

Howard Schubiner is board certified in pediatrics, adolescent medicine, and internal medicine and is the director of the Mind Body Medicine Center at Providence Hospital in Southfield. He is a Clinical Professor at Wayne State University School of Medicine and is a fellow in the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Society for Adolescent Medicine.

Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre, founded by Mata Yogananda Mahasaya Dharma, is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit near Lansing. Its aim is to support those struggling or suffering in life on any level, and to assist those who seek inner knowledge and personal growth in the pursuit of peace, health, and happiness.

Elizabeth Shadigian, MD, is a board-certified OB/Gyn, teacher, researcher, and consultant specializing in the safety and well being of women. She founded the Battered Women and Children's Memorial Garden and recently opened her private practice, WomanSafeHealth.

Sarah Sharkey, OP, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, is faculty member at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, where she teaches scripture.

Judy Shepard ‘SoHum’ is certified in hypnotherapy, EFT, and Reiki, and is a student of meditation.

Mary Shields, PhD, is an NCBTMB approved provider who brings more than 16 years of teaching experience to her BodyTalk classes.

Vijayalaxmi Shinde is a scholar of both Eastern and Western traditions in palmistry. She is available for readings and guidance relating to birth traits, aptitudes, career, relationships, business, wealth, and well-being, as well as all other aspects of life.

Marina Sionov is a longtime student of Buddhist thought and practice as well as the theosophical teachings of H.P. Blavatsky. Marina oversees the bookshop and library of The Theosophical Society in Detroit, as well as serving on the Board of Directors.

Missy Siudara is 4th Degree Black Belt in Shorin Ryu Karate.

SMART is Southeast Michigan Astrologers' Round Table, a chapter of National Council for Geocosmic Research. This group of astrology students and professionals have been meeting since 1994, and use their association for networking, engaging speakers, and discussing matters of concern and interest to astrologers.

Lynette Smith began studying yoga in 1978 and started teaching in 1985. Her continual studies in the spiritual focus, along with the therapeutic aspects of yoga practice, inform and enliven her teaching style. She offers gentle yoga at The Wellness Community, emphasizing our ability to listen to our bodies and to have fun in the experience of learning new ways to stretch and strengthen ourselves.

Jessica Snyder is an Ayurvedic practitioner and massage therapist and currently practices in Ann Arbor. She recently spent four months in Nepal offering free Ayurvedic health camps in villages.

Spirit Weavers is an organization dedicated to providing experiential training in shamanism and offering shamanic healing, locally and long-distance.

Jaminda Springer has been working in child care and education for over 18 years. She manufactures and sells baby carriers and slings through her company Nato Bello.

Emma Stefanova, owner of Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation, is a yoga and meditation master, accomplished yoga therapist, and trainer since 1979. She guides and inspires in all aspects of holistic, therapeutic, and spiritual yoga and belongs to the world renowned Satyananda Yoga lineage. She offers yoga and meditation classes, and education programs for yoga teachers and therapists.